

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Lin (USPN 5,764,263) in view of Kimura (US 2004/0189742). Applicants traverse the rejection for at least the following reasons.

Lin is directed to an ink jet printing device that is designed to reduce curl of printed paper by printed either a colorless or colored ink on a backside of the paper. Lin does not disclose or suggest moving of either the front or backside printhead to a non-printing position, priming of a printhead, or pressurizing a printhead.

Kimura, as shown at least in Figs. 1 and 11 and described at least at paragraph 0081, discloses pressurizing pressure control tank 6 to force ink through pipe line 5 to ink jet head 2 and out from nozzle 10. The pressure is applied to the ink in pressure control tank 6, not ink jet head 2. Thus, Kimura does not disclose or suggest pressurizing a printhead to force ink therethrough as set forth in claim 1.

As described above, neither Lin nor Kimura, alone or in combination, disclose or suggest pressurizing a printhead to force a stream of ink through discharge jets of the printhead. Therefore, the combination of references does not disclose or suggest every feature of claim 1. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are in order and are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3 and 6-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Lin (USPN 5,764,263) in view of Ishiguro (JP 09-001827) and Cipolla (USPN 6,491,368). Claims 4 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Lin in view of Ishiguro and Cipolla (USPN 6,491,368), and further in view of Watanabe (EP 435276). Applicants traverse each of the rejections for at least the following reasons.

Again, Lin is directed to an ink jet printing device that is designed to reduce curl of printed paper by printed either a colorless or colored ink on a backside of the paper. Lin does not disclose or suggest moving of either the front or backside printhead to a non-printing position, priming of a printhead, or pressurizing a printhead.

Ishiguro is directed to a printing device wherein the maintenance station is small, performing multiple functions in the same space. As described in paragraph 0014, the maintenance station includes an aspiration pipe 6 comprising a

hollow tube 12 with holes 10 therethrough, wherein the tube is covered with a foam 7 which is in contact with the printhead when maintenance is performed. During maintenance, at least the foam is rotated to first clear foreign matter from the nozzles of the printhead (paragraph 0013). Then, suction is generated through the aspiration pipe 6 which acts through the porous foam 7 to suck ink from the nozzles of the printhead (paragraph 0014). Ishiguro does not disclose or suggest pressurizing the printhead to push out debris, as claimed by Applicants. Instead, Ishiguro applies suction externally to the printhead to pull out ink.

Cipolla discloses a printing system having a primer for selectively priming one of two printheads in a multicolor printer. As described at col. 5, lines 27-30 and 41-58, the priming system comprises a vacuum source in the form of a peristaltic pump for each printhead cap. “Ink is removed from the printhead 17, together with any air bubbles therein, by the vacuum produced by peristaltic pump 45.” See col. 5, lines 54-56. Thus, Cipolla describes using suction in the form of a vacuum external to the printhead to remove ink and air bubbles from the printhead.

The combination of Lin, Ishiguro, and Cipolla teaches or suggests pulling ink from a printhead using a vacuum applied externally to the printhead. The combination does not disclose or suggest all the features of the claimed invention, in particular, a priming position where the printhead is pressurized to a prime pressure sufficient to force a stream of ink through discharge jets of the printhead.

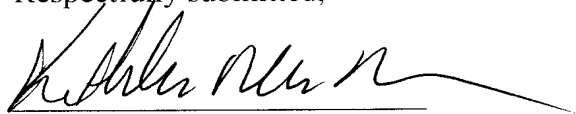
Watanable et al. is directed to a recording unit cartridge, whereby all or a portion of a full-width recording unit can be easily replaced within a printing apparatus. Within the recording unit, the printhead can be moved from a printing to a recovery position, wherein the printhead is activated to print an all ink image, such that the ink is ejected into a reservoir. See col. 9, lines 11-17 and 27-33. Watanable et al. does not disclose or suggest pressurizing the printhead to remove dried ink or debris. Watanable et al. thus does not overcome the deficiencies of Lin in view of Ishiguro and Cipolla because Watanable et al. does not teach, disclose, or suggest at least a printhead having a priming position where the printhead is pressurized to a prime pressure sufficient to force a stream of ink through discharge jets of the printhead.

None of the applied references, alone or in combination, disclose or suggest pressurizing the printhead to eject pressurized ink, thereby clearing debris from the nozzle. Thus, none of the references, taken alone or in any combination, discloses or suggests the claimed invention. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are in order, and are respectfully solicited.

All of claims 1-24 being in condition for allowance for at least the above reasons, reconsideration and prompt action in the form of a Notice of Allowance are respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner require anything further, or have any questions, the Examiner is asked to contact Applicants' undersigned representative.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kathleen Neuner Manne', written over a horizontal line.

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If the Examiner is unable to reach the Applicant(s) Attorney at the telephone number provided, the Examiner is requested to communicate with Eastman Kodak Company Patent Operations at (585) 477-4656.